



Rebuild Iowa Task Force Long Term Recovery Planning Meeting Notes

August 7, 2008 — 9:30 a.m.
Urbandale Public Library, Meeting Room B
3520 86th Street, Urbandale, Iowa

Task Force Members Present:

Carroll Reasoner, Chair, Cedar Rapids
Amy Truax, Chair, Parkersburg
Lu Barron, Linn County, Cedar Rapids
Bob Dvorsky, Iowa General Assembly, Cedar Rapids
Jim Erb, Attorney and Mayor, Charles City
Steve Hammes, Hammes Business Planning and Strategy, Cedar Rapids
Sara Hektoen, City of Iowa City, Iowa City
Steve Kettering, Iowa General Assembly, Lake View
Glenn Leach, Diocese of Davenport, Davenport
A.J. Mumm, Polk County Emergency Management, Ankeny
Tyler Olson, Iowa General Assembly, Cedar Rapids
Connie Peterson, The University of Iowa, Iowa City
Kristen Roberts, Coe College, Cedar Rapids
Elizabeth Selk, Heritage Area Agency on Aging, Cedar Rapids
Tamara Shipman, Great River Home Health Care and Hospice, West Burlington
Steve Smith, JE Dunn Construction, Clive
Sally Stutsman, Johnson County Supervisor, Riverside
Brian Tapp, SE Iowa Regional Planning Commission, Burlington
Tom Underwood, City of Lake Park, Spirit Lake
Ralph Watts, Iowa General Assembly, Adel
Sue Weinacht, Hawkeye Labor Council, Hiawatha
Julie Wulfekuhle, Tom Riley Law Firm, Independence

Resource Group Members Present:

Les Beck, Linn County, Cedar Rapids
Jody Braverman, Southgate Development Services, Iowa City
Mark Buskohl, Farmer, Grundy Center
Dean Clermont, University of Iowa Health Care, Iowa City
Tad Cooper, Acterra Group, Marion
Phillip Delafield, City of Des Moines, Des Moines
Tracey Dormandy, Iowa State University Extension, Creston
Clint Fincher, City of Avoca, Avoca
Karin Ford, Iowa Department of Public Health, Des Moines
Rebecca Hall, Our Financial Concierge, Polk City
Greg Jenkins, Great Muscatine Chamber, Muscatine
Thomas Jepson, Coralville
Kathleen Kleiman, Simmons Perrine PLC, Cedar Rapids

Barbara Knight, Community Volunteer, Cedar Rapids
Darryl Knight, Iowa State University, Ames
Jeff Kolb, Butler County Development, Allison
Stephen Lacina, Cedar County Economic Development, Tipton
Keri Neblett, Crisis Center, Iowa City
Robert Olson, Durrant, Des Moines
Elizabeth Pearson, Iowa Policy Project, Iowa City
William Phelan, Greater Muscatine Chamber, Muscatine
Ronald Randazzo, Iowa Speedway, Des Moines
Dean Robertson, Cedar Rapids
Randy Ross, Monona County Emergency Management, Sergeant Bluff
Tracy Rucker, John Deere, Waterloo
Leslie Schaffer, American Red Cross, Des Moines
Scott Schoenike, VenuWorks, Cedar Rapids
Michael Stadie, Lutheran Services of Iowa, Davenport
Jon Thompson, Iowa Realty, Cedar Rapids
Christopher Thoms, Northland Fitness, Cedar Rapids
Kimberly Warren, Slavin Management Consultants, Muscatine
Ruth Wilcox, Iowa State University Extension, Grundy Center

Observers:

Benjamin Alexander, Federal Emergency Management Agency
Lon Anderson, House Republican Caucus Staff, Des Moines
Steve Castener, Federal Emergency Management Agency
Ed Cook, Legislative Services Agency, Des Moines
Becky Hall, Polk City
Jennifer Jacobs, Des Moines Register, Des Moines
Carolann Jensen, Senate Republican Caucus Staff
Theresa Kehoe, Senate Democratic Caucus Staff, Des Moines
Gary Lozano, RDG, Des Moines
Mary Beth Mellick, Legislative Service Agency, Des Moines
Margaret Messer, US Small Business Administration, Urbandale JFO
Ray Palmer, Federal Emergency Management Agency
Dave Reynolds, Legislative Service Agency, Des Moines
Dean Robertsen, Cedar Rapids
Joe Ramano, House Democratic Research Staff, Des Moines
Gary Taylor, Iowa State University, Ames

Staff:

Susan Dixon, Rebuild Iowa Office
Arlinda McKeen, State Public Policy Group
Tom Slater, State Public Policy Group
Brooke Findley, State Public Policy Group
Ben Banowetz, State Public Policy Group

Welcome and Introductions – Carroll Reasoner and Amy Truax

Reasoner introduced herself and Truax and thanked the group for attending and agreeing to serve and to talk about this important issue. She outlined Executive Order 7, the Rebuild Iowa Office, its staff and the work of the Rebuild Iowa Advisory Commission and the Task Force

structure. She also introduced Susan Dixon who staffs the Task Force and Arlinda McKeen of State Public Policy Group and facilitator for the day.

Charge to the Task Force and Overview of the Day

Reasoner continued to outline the details of the Task Force structure and responsibility. Truax introduced herself and noted that she is from Parkersburg and the tornado took her house and her insurance business has been impacted.

The Task Force and Resource Group members and introduced themselves. McKeen asked the everyone to sign in, correct contact information, and outlined lunch options.

Truax outlined the Task Force Charge and Member Responsibilities and directed the group toward the document describing both in the packet. She noted that the Long Term Recovery Planning Task Force is the last Task Force to meet. She noted the Task Force member responsibilities and recognized the broad areas of expertise represented by the Task Force and Resource Group members. She also explained that she and Reasoner will present information about this meeting at the next Rebuild Iowa Advisory Commission meeting in Cedar Falls and a report is due to the Governor on August 21. She shared the list of other Task Forces that have met: Infrastructure and Transportation, Cultural Heritage and Records Retention, Housing, Education, Economic and Resource Development, Floodplain Management and Hazard Mitigation, Agriculture and Environment, Health and Human Services. She also directed the group's attention to the list of the top three long-term priorities from each of the Task Forces located in the group's packets. She outlined the items that will appear in the forty-five day report.

McKeen reiterated the thanks to all of the Task Force and Resource Group members to commit to the time spent today discussing this issue. She indicated that the size of the group was impressive. She outlined the plan for the day and reminded everyone to speak up to allow for the large group to hear everyone's comments. She recognized that the people sitting around the room are volunteering their time to participate in the important process. She discussed the roles of the Task Force, Resource Group, and observers. She also discussed the importance of not just putting things back the way that they were before the disasters. She challenged the group to take advantage of the mixed opportunities the weather has given Iowa to make decisions for a safer, smarter, and stronger Iowa. McKeen reminded the group that the incidents of the spring and summer of 2008 could have happened anywhere, and that should enter into the discussion and thinking about long-term planning for the entire state.

Presentation of Information

Sustainable Development in Land Use Policy – Gary Taylor, Assistant Professor and Extension Specialist, Department of Community and Regional Planning, Iowa State University

Reasoner introduced Gary Taylor, Assistant Professor and Extension Specialist, Department of Community and Regional Planning from Iowa State University to talk about Sustainable Development in Land Use Policy. Taylor noted that he serves on the Floodplain Management and Hazard Mitigation Task Force and recognized the importance of the Long Term Recovery Planning Task Force in bringing issues facing all of the Task Forces together. Taylor discussed the importance of planning for sustainability in development through consideration of land use. The state spent many years trying to separate how land is used in communities and now will try to put it back together. He noted that sustainable development "meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs." He added that sustainable development in terms of land use also "promotes the environmental, social, and economic health of communities." Sustainable development also means more efficient use of

our land and environmentally-sensitive development patterns. In most urban areas, land consumption is doubling compared to the rise in population, aside from those areas that have instituted rigorous standards in development. Impacts of inefficient land use can include longer commutes and automobile travel now required to meet basic needs. This also means increased levels of air pollution, a depressed rate of walking and alternative transportation use, loss of farmland and critical environmental areas, increased risk of flooding, and increased severity of floods. Taylor reported that as population density and employment density decreases in urban areas, there is a lower density in the former employment centers, which further leads to distance in automobile trips increase and a lower amount of walking, correlated to obesity rates. The free market has, to a degree, created these land use patterns; however, the market is shaped by a system of incentives, disincentives and biases of both public and private actors. These include:

- Lender Financing
- Tax Code
- Public Projects
- Economic Development Incentives
- Sticking with “what works”
- Zoning and Subdivision Codes
- Building Codes
- Scale Efficiencies in Development

Sustainable alternatives include Smart Growth development patterns, recognizing that Smart Growth does not mean “no growth.” Taylor shared information about a study conducted in-part by the Brookings Institution called that showed that the cost of providing infrastructure and delivering services can be reduced through thoughtful design and planning. The same report also indicated that regional economic performance is enhanced when community benefits and vital urban centers that are incorporated into land use patterns include denser labor markets, purchasing markets, and amenities. He also noted the importance of social amenities is driving where people are choosing to live.

Taylor outlined Principles of Smart Growth.

- Mix land uses
- Take advantage of compact building design
- Encourage community and stakeholder collaboration
- Make development decisions predictable, fair, and cost effective
- Create a range of housing opportunities and choice
- Create walkable neighborhoods
- Foster distinctive, attractive communities
- Preserve open space, farmland, natural beauty, and critical environmental areas
- Strengthen and direct development towards existing communities
- Provide a variety of transportation choices

The group discussed what it would take to put the live-work-play amenities together: communities can build this into the building code and avoid the process of receiving variances. Taylor also discussed the importance of high density development to provide services and that about half of the homes, office buildings, stores, and factories needed by 2030 do not exist today. This is due to a higher population living in a higher number of spaces that are smaller than in the past. He noted that there are many examples of Smart Growth manuals, and that many other states, such as Wisconsin, have gone further than Iowa in planning for Smart Growth, including legislation. He encouraged that these principles be considered for all levels of comprehensive land use planning.

The group discussed that the Smart Growth principles seem to be most appropriate for new building and Smart Growth planning could work in places that are rebuilding that already have critical infrastructure such as sewer and water systems. Taylor noted that Smart Growth concentrates on the importance of taking advantage of what opportunities are available, and that these principles apply very well in these rebuilding situations. The group also recognized that retrofitting for mixed use development using Smart Growth principles will be an important consideration for rebuilding efforts in Iowa.

Best Practices in Community and Regional Planning – Gary Lozano, RDG Planning

Truax introduced Gary Lozano from RDG Planning to present on Best Practices in Community and Regional Planning. Lozano introduced himself and shared that he is from Fort Madison and provided other information about his professional background. He presented his best practices in planning.

- Adoption and update of comprehensive plans
 - There is a huge importance for communities to plan, and communities and counties to take advantage of regional planning agencies and maintain recognition that quality development is important.
- Increased concerns about quality development
 - West Des Moines has led the way in developing using green space. Many communities are often hard-pressed for development interest and do not want to put too many requirements on new development zoning ordinances such as landscaping. Minimum requirements often become maximum requirements in development.
- New Urbanism
 - Looking at the post WWII development, where single family residential development is separated from multi-family, which is also separated from retail development. New Urbanism looks to older neighborhoods where items are linked together with mixed uses.
- Smart Growth
 - A reaction to New Urbanism, and a push toward diversity in land use and neighborhood makeup.
- Neighborhood based planning
 - Related to Smart Growth, rather than growing in individual developments, a move toward planning and linking multiple development opportunities and linking institutions into neighborhoods. It has been determined that $\frac{1}{4}$ of a mile is an appropriate walking distance from home to amenities. Ankeny is at the forefront of applying neighborhood-based planning models. It is important to recognize characteristics of a community and adjust zoning to take advantage of those built-in opportunities.
- Stormwater management
 - Low-impact development requirements are designed by the Federal and State governments to require new developments to minimize impacts to the environment. This includes runoff rate and volume control, sediment, nutrient, and pollution control, and physical habitat preservation and creation.
- Conservation development
 - Takes into account natural features of the landscape and maximizes returns on investments. Flexibility on lot size and layout preserves the resources and allows the developer and planners to work together.

Task Force members discussed the population growth caused by immigration and migration within the state toward growth centers that are experiencing new development. For stormwater management, cities with a population of over 100,000 people are held to stricter standards from

the federal government, and a regional approach is necessary to encourage new innovations. Lozano noted that Iowa is behind other states in Smart Growth planning. Reasoner thanked Lozano for his presentation.

Long Term Community Recovery Planning Process – Steve Castaner, FEMA Emergency Support Function 14 (ESF 14)

Reasoner introduced Steve Castaner from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Emergency Support Function 14 to talk about Long Term Community Recovery Planning Processes. He noted that recovery is a process and that the “get it done” way of doing things is not always the best way. Emergency Support Function 14, also called Long Term Community Recovery Planning is part of the National Response Framework. This includes the formal structure about how federal agencies come together after a disaster, giving FEMA the ability to bring other resources to the table. He noted that all of the best practices mentioned before in presentations can be part of recovery processes and it is important for communities come together to plan for rebuilding and to organize project priorities. Castaner shared a story about the long-term recovery planning process in another part of the country and how without the process, a hospital would have been built in the exact same location with the exact same problems. It is important to make sure that current emotions and fears are not making decisions about the long term community needs. Long term community recovery processes provide integrity to the process and projects that are important. Coordination is essential to long term recovery. FEMA has set up a collaborative opportunity for several agencies to work together to manage contracts, coordinate funding agencies, troubleshoot, and arrive at solutions. Most of the time, FEMA assistance with community planning is unnecessary, but in times of significant disaster, this service is activated.

Task Force members discussed that comprehensive planning was extremely effective and it is important to not let the opportunity for money drive decisions, rather to have the vision for the future of the community be the driving force behind these decisions. Some processes and timing between communities may not match up, but goals will be fed up through a process to align with a larger statewide plan. The group discussed that FEMA also assists with mitigation and prevention of future issues. The ESF 14 is a process, rather than a program, and programs are how people usually think about FEMA.

How to Keep the Community Informed and Involved in the Process – Benjamin Alexander, FEMA ESF 14

Truax introduced Benjamin Alexander to talk about “How to Keep the Community Informed and Involved in the Process.” Alexander noted that it is such a complex world of projects and programs, that it is important to bring resources together to find solutions. This is a very challenging and complicated process. This process can often be contentious and working with people and prevailing emotions can be very challenging. Key elements to success include engaging a diverse population, and the toughest part can often be to get people at the table, which usually includes a personal invitation and personally engaging them. It is also extremely important to have the correct subject matter experts and materials. For the dialogue to be meaningful, a facilitated conversational discussion allows naysayers and supporters to participate equally and that the information shared be very clear and understood. After all the ideas and points have been shared, it is vital to “close the feedback loop.” It is important for the community to see ideas come to fruition and rally around that to build trust and ownership to maintain momentum and energy for the community. Community involvement is needed through the whole process: listen, document, and confirm. The decision-making process can be easy if the decisions are made by consensus rather than having the decisions dictated by just a few leaders in the community. People will participate at their own level in their own time. It is challenging but important to plan and act concurrently. Recovery projects need to be developed

and prioritized, and then resources and partnerships need to be established and maintained. Implementation of these planned projects will not solve all of these problems, but helps people by providing hope and getting people where they want to be.

Reasoner asked for some clarification on how ESF 14 works. This particular program is selective, and if a community is devastated beyond traditional programs, the long term community recovery planning function is called out. FEMA has been conducting assessments to determine the level of catastrophic impact, and not all 99 counties will qualify. Those communities that do qualify are contacted. Since ESF 14 concentrates on communities, the Task Force will be looking at what can drive state policy and support federal policy and support what is possible through FEMA and other opportunities at the local level. The Task Force discussed if communities would end up competing for the ESF14 staff attention. Alexander explained that FEMA makes recommendations about where they may best be able to assist. Assistance timelines will depend on the communities that FEMA is working in and that community's needs.

Dixon added that the main reason for asking ESF 14 personnel to speak was to keep community outreach principles in mind when planning for long term recovery, not just to recognize that specific program. Task Force members discussed the issues with people moving ahead before the plan has been put into place, and the importance that some things may not fit nicely. Alexander reminded everyone to keep in mind that there were problems with anomalies prior to the storm as well, but patience in reaching long term benefits do take time. He also encouraged the group to be prepared to move along with the majority, recognizing that some will go a different route in rebuilding, and that is okay.

The group took a lunch break at 12:05 and reconvened at 12:40.

Overview of Key Points from Other RIAC Task Forces – Susan Dixon, Rebuild Iowa Office

McKeen thanked the group for returning from lunch and discussed how the Task Force and Resource Group conversation will work in the afternoon. She noted that on every Task Force there are members of the General Assembly, and at this meeting the members of the General Assembly are full participating members of the group. She started by discussing what a long term recovery planning process will mean to Iowa. She turned the floor over to Susan Dixon to talk about long term issues that have been identified by the other Task Forces. She cautioned the group to remember that this list shared in packets are just ideas to get the conversations started, but are not required to be the ultimate recommendations of this Task Force. Top three recommendations from each Task Force include:

Infrastructure and Transportation:

1. Build facilities to better and greener standards rather than just returning to pre-disaster conditions.
2. Funding for planning activities for broader geographic areas.
3. Allow mitigation activities outside of impacted communities' corporate boundaries.

Cultural Affairs and Records Retention:

1. Priority in rebuilding effort to save structures rather than demolish whenever possible and, particularly, when concerning historic properties; this is also the most environmentally sustainable option and serves to preserve a community's sense of place.
2. Community/regional planning should include representatives of arts and culture organizations as stakeholders in the planning process. Need better effort to identify cultural resources/assets within a planning jurisdiction and to include those in

emergency management plans in a collaborative, cohesive manner (training for both emergency managers and cultural organizations as necessary).

3. Identification of regional locations (for local/county governments) and centralized location (for State government) records storage facilities outside of the 500-year floodplain

Housing:

1. Case management to support individuals and families navigate the systems and programs. There are significant issues and gaps in access to and easy-to-understand information about what people in need of housing assistance need to do, who can offer assistance, how to go about it, and what the decision points may be. People who are displaced from their homes or have suffered damages are often overwhelmed and not able to make wise decisions under stress. Having adequate information would assist them. A one-stop resource, an on-line resource, and one-on-one real person to work with on an ongoing basis are important to lowans' ability to recover and make decisions in their own best interests.
2. Replacement housing is critical in the longer term, although immediate need for temporary housing is also being addressed. Adequate replacement housing should be sustainable, livable for people of all ages and abilities, and affordable. Long term planning issues include both production issues and affordability issues. Production for the long term needs to consider neighborhood/community fit an appropriate for the projected market of the homes.
3. Bring new production ideas to bear in producing affordable homes. Early on, information on the markets, price points, and housing needs must be assembled. To meet the identified needs, Iowa should consider new ideas and models that can be adapted and used in the state. Adequate, affordable housing will be a top priority so that individuals and families affected by the disasters might have access to quality, sustainable housing at a price they can afford.

Education:

1. Ensure resources are made available to address funding gaps
 - a. Local school districts
 - b. Preschool services
 - c. Higher education
2. Upon declaration of disaster, alternative project procurement and construction are allowed
3. Strongly encourage school districts, Pre-K, and higher education organization/institutions to develop a coordinated hazard mitigation plan. Include membership in the Iowa Mutual Aid Compact as a best practice.

Economic and Workforce Development:

1. Immediate Business Grants: The state needs to step up and develop new resources. Focus should be on business recovery. Small businesses cannot afford to take on more loans (SBA) and need access to grant money.
2. Forgivable loan program: Businesses should be given forgivable loan programs that tie with the local and regional community. There should be conditions imposed on these loans. Three suggested conditions for granting forgivable loans:
 - a. Business should reopen,
 - b. Businesses should hire back at least the 90% the same people as before, and
 - c. Pay the same wages. The group agreed that this is very reasonable. If companies agree to meet these terms, loans should be forgiven. Nonprofits can apply for this with the same rules but will need to meet eligibility criteria from SBA.

3. Ensure continued skills training: Community Colleges should have funds and resources available to meet the skills shortages through providing adequate training. Some folks just need soft skill training. Ramp up efforts to publicize existing IWD programs including the Emergency Jobs Program (National Emergency Grant) and Disaster Unemployment Assistance.

Floodplain Management and Hazard Mitigation

1. Immediate housing before cold weather.
2. Floodplain mapping. Allowing for a more accurate representation of areas of risk.
3. Thoughtful and wise mitigation with a regional focus.

Agriculture and Health were not available to receive comments.

Dixon noted that her background is in hazard mitigation and building safer, stronger, and smarter requires the Task Force to think of how the state can encourage building looking at vulnerabilities and make some fact-based decisions to minimize risk. She encouraged the group to look at “how do you want your community to be resilient?”

Issue Identification, Gaps Identification and Prioritization

McKeen recognized that the Rebuild Iowa Office has been staffed with state agency staff that has experience in a variety of pertinent areas. The Task Force is charged to figuring out how Iowa is going to move through the recovery and rebuilding process, and to design a list of priorities of what we can do well into the future. Some of that may be around what kind of a structure needs to be put together to design a process for recovery. She asked the group to talk about the important benefits of having a recovery plan.

The Task Force discussed the need to talk about recovery and how the process can happen quicker. The group needs to have data to the extent possible geographically and across issue areas. Disaster plans would be more valuable if they start with the state and set an example for communities and institutions that address Iowa-specific problems, have a section on state and federal funding, and what to do after a disaster that would function as a guidebook. This is 50% a recovery plan for floods and tornadoes, but the other 50% is making sure that there is also planning for the future disaster. There is already a requirement for mitigation, response, and recovery planning, and it will be important for each entity to build upon what they have. Right now the state has recovery plans, and the three parts of the plan do not work together perfectly. It is important to have a plan that meets with real life. State code and administrative code that require a comprehensive approach to planning would be a good place to start. There was a recognition that a typical three-part plan turns into three different plans.

The Task Force discussed the process of the three-part plan and how it could be adjusted to serve the state better. The group discussed how important it is for the plan to include information for the public and to encourage people to take responsibility to do things on their own in their own community. It will be important for the public also to know how often the plans are updated, who is required to have one, and who needs to be included in planning. Dixon explained that many times there is funding to do local hazard mitigation plans that address community issues, and a plan is necessary before communities can receive mitigation money. The focus is based on the community; one of the largest problems with this is receiving community buy-in unless there is a disaster.

Regional planning commissions update comprehensive development plans annually and also update transportation plans. The state at this time does not require that all of the plans work together so there are no teeth behind these plans. Long-term planning should be required to

have a long-term integrated plan. For individual assistance, communities have trouble organizing until there is a disaster, in part because there is no incentive for long term recovery planning and implementation. It might help to have a statewide monitor for these types of plans. The group discussed that unless there are local codes and ordinances in place, changes and mitigation plans are not implemented. If a community adopts a code, they need to be prepared to defend it and be ready to come up against those who do not have an understanding about why this is so important. As a home rule state, if you are under 10,000 in population, you do not have to follow state building codes.

Members of the Task Force also discussed the importance of incentives for making changes. It was discussed that it is important to talk about recovery statewide, as it extends outside of the specific community that had a loss. Cohesion is not demonstrated at all in terms of the resources that have been availed to citizens. It will be important to plan for the next disaster, and it should be noted that those plans in place did assist in making it possible to survive the disaster without a death. It is important to note that plans are necessary for all areas that were affected to make even better plans at the state level in a coordinated way. The assistance that is arriving is complicated, and a state-coordinated effort to avoid fighting over resources that we all need is extremely important.

Task Force Members discussed that it will be important to keep discussions at a regional level, and that the state needs to provide resources to figure out how to implement it. The state of Iowa does not required comprehensive plans and that is embarrassing. Those places that do plan, will succeed but we need to have a plan in those areas where that is not currently a practice. Local adaptability and innovation is important. As each individual city plans, they need to work through recovery and find places in Iowa code where there is a barrier to receiving resources. The group discussed how property taxes impact everything that the state discusses and will need to be an important part of the conversation. One Task Force member indicated that the state needs to reaffirm ties to capital spending projects, to find a source of funding. The Task Force recognized that the Legislature will need to deal with the decimation of the tax base due to the loss, with the possibility of an economic shortfall with the loss of capacity on the local level, an analysis will be required. A recovery plan would look at where we are as a state, where resources are located in order to recover and look at a way to put those resources in place so that the appropriate level of activity can commence.

The Task Force discussed the importance of community plan coordination, as many structures can affect other communities at different areas of the floodway system. The Department of Natural Resources does look at watersheds for quality but not as far as how the plans fit together. Dixon discussed the ability to look at watershed pressures from a broad perspective. McKeen noted that there was a lot of discussion about watershed area planning in the Floodplain Management and Hazard Mitigation Task Force. Task Force members discussed finding a current program and expanding the breadth to assisting in changing behaviors and minimizing impacts from local and developmental activities. Councils of Governments were also suggested as ideal planning leaders, and more resources will be needed.

The Task Force discussed that it is important to make sure that this long term plan needs to be proactive and that it is important not just to concentrate on recovery, but also mitigation. It will be important to keep rural issues in mind. On the farm, neighbors help neighbors, and people were educated on what to do in emergencies. Farmers may be a good model in personal responsibility and preparedness. A Task Force member also discussed the possibility of expanding hydroelectric opportunities in Iowa. One Task Force member reminded the group that population density varies in different parts of the state and planning will be affected accordingly.

A Task Force member discussed revenue mechanisms, indicating that they feel the legislature has too much control, and the state needs to work to find a way to build revenue. It is important to remember that communities were built before anyone was paying attention to this issue. For revenue generation for the recovery effort, Task Force members discussed the community foundation structure as a possible vehicle.

The group discussed that this is a land use issue, and that a disaster should be defined as any issue that happens in the state and may include ice storms that could send the power grid down. It is important to look at best practices in other states. Task Force members discussed that this disaster could put other homeowners at risk due to tax ramifications.

The group discussed that all emergency management plans are required to be multi-hazard and it is important to look at individual procedures according to the type of hazard. Transportation, public works, emergency management, housing, and others are all functions that apply to an individual crisis. Plans are designed this way because that is what works. Procedures that have to accompany broader coordinating plans do change according to the variety of hazards that the state of Iowa faces. There has to be a smooth transition between all stages of recovery. Emergency management and recovery cannot be put into individual silos.

Reasoner asked the group to focus on plans for meeting requirements for the 45-day report. The devastation is huge and there are not enough resources. The first report is to assist the Governor with what to ask the legislature to work on during a September special session. She asked the group to think about flexibility to cities and counties to raise revenues and to reassign priorities. Flexibility could be granted at this level for just a couple of years in order to get creative to have options to rebuild. She also encouraged the group to consider regionalization and code changes to allow for those regional considerations, and it needs to come fast. The Task Force also discussed the benefits of 28E agreements in assisting service sharing and regional approaches. Comments were made that over the long run, elective offices stand to be affected through regionalization and that many people drag their feet due to that reason. The more political will that people have to share about 28E and other issues will make it easier to move ideas along. Not every community in a region was affected the same, but those areas that are affected less have opportunities available to assist, such as empty storefronts that businesses could reopen in a new town.

The group discussed that the special session in September will not include a lot of funding changes, rather will make code changes. Three recommendations that were suggested at the end of the conversation:

- Reprioritize at the state level.
- Regionalize to provide higher quality services, disallow reverse referendums to stop opportunities. Make regionalization more attractive or demand it
- Allow more innovation and adaptability at the local government level.

Dixon cautioned the group to keep in mind that local development can put tremendous pressure on local levels, which is where the many layers of government are helpful. Many noted that as regionalization opportunities are being identified, new options also face new concerns, such as transportation issues. One Task Force member expressed frustration in putting forward out of the box thinking to move things forward, it is disappointing to only be making changes in special session that do not assist with innovation. They discussed the importance of indicating that it will be important to hold on the expenditure of funds that may be avoided or put off, like construction of new legislative offices, until this all gets sorted out.

If the state is going to have effective working storm sewers, there needs to be funding to assist those communities with fewer than 10,000 people. Also, flood insurance is also a major shortfall that needs to be incentivized. A Task Force member noted that it does not appear that anyone is leading, and insurance, FEMA, SBA, and others are all talking. People cannot make any decisions because not everyone is all together, and the early recovery process must begin before this long-term process can even begin.

The Task Force discussed that those facing local disasters and address local concerns is very challenging. One Task Force member shared a story about responding to the disaster in New Orleans and how some National Guard soldiers asked him, a volunteer, what to do. He added that it is important not to wait for others to act.

A Task Force member noted the importance of recognizing the rebuilding effort includes people and it will be important to infuse resources into case management services. Some counties were very well organized and have support systems in place, but need additional funds to do so. Then, there are other communities who had barriers to accessing services that need an infrastructure of support and resources to receive assistance. The group discussed that suicide rates and other mental health issues increase after a disaster. McKeen reported other Task Forces have concentrated on the issues of a need for support and case management for those who have experienced trauma and that mental health issues will be another important consideration. The Task Force members discussed the importance of recognizing who the stakeholders are and the specific issues that they face.

Task Force members discussed the need to come together and lean on corporate partners and other services to meet basic needs like getting mail and checking credit reports.

Task Force members recognized the need to have some guiding principles in place to accompany a plan. When Iowa rebuilds, the state needs to do so at a disaster-resilient way. It is also important not to forget partners that can move more quickly than the state and federal level. A system that could meet fiscal needs quickly will be an important part of a redevelopment plan and the plan should definitely include appropriate funding for local emergency management staff. Task Force members recognized that decisions are best made at a local level and that there is a lost perspective that the money that is coming back to the state was originally paid out by citizens in taxes.

Task Force members discussed the importance of community people being designated as disseminators of information in a trained volunteer capacity with a guidebook written in plain language. A long term recovery effort should be geared toward the average Iowan. Information is a critical component of any plan, and volunteers would be an excellent conduit of information. It will be important to make sure that the information is correct and the volunteers are trained. Task Force members also recognized that many state employees could be deployed from unaffected areas around the state that have a built-in set of skills.

A Task Force member encouraged the group to look at the money being spent by the Iowa Department of Economic Development for attracting businesses to Iowa may be best redirected to recovery efforts, as many cities could not afford the local match. Additionally, affected businesses already in Iowa should be assisted first, as they are not entitled to as many programs.

McKeen asked the group to discuss their interest in assisting in long-term planning in the future.

Task Force Members indicated that the group is established and should be kept together. Members discussed whether this group has a responsibility to deal just with these incidents, or looking forward to all incidents: is this group's task about planning or recovery efforts for the people affected now? McKeen noted that this is the only one of the nine task forces that is not designing specific immediate recommendations. This Task Force is a bit different: looking at what the state as a whole should do for planning for the future.

Dixon agreed, indicating that she has thought of this Task Force as putting long-term recommendations and planning processes together as it relates to the issues studied in the other Task Forces. She added that it is not the plan that is important, rather the planning process and coordination. The Task Force discussed that the word 'recovery' does not just mean immediate recovery, also planning for minimizing a surge from happening again, and it is important to look at a long-range plan. The group discussed bringing Iowa back to a state that is better than they were before and more resistant to the same disasters from happening in the future. The Task Force recognized that people are affected, but this particular group is going to concentrate on recovering in the long term and keeping cohesion across the state.

The Task Force members discussed hearing during the presentation that other states have moved ahead of Iowa in growth areas and the importance of studying other states and learning from their success. They also recognized that this Task Force will have a lot of work to do to assist in taking an overarching look at the 120-day point to see what gaps still exist and how to meet them. McKeen discussed how often gaps are identified in other Task Forces as capacity issues, resources, political will, and others that will keep being identified after the 45-day process.

McKeen noted that the 45-day report will serve as an early report of issues, from which the Rebuild Iowa Advisory Commission will write its report to further identify priorities for the state at a preliminary level. This report will be presented to the Governor and Lt. Governor. Work will continue to identify and prioritize, and a more comprehensive 120-day report will be released later this year.

Task Force members discussed the importance of an intermediate information sharing mechanism, much of which is starting in each community between faith communities and volunteers. Some faith-based organizations and teams, such as the Iowa Disaster Human Resource Council have already set up a team structure to address relief issues and assess needs and many are working through processes that do take a long time due to the size and scope of the issue. Now this group also uses an incident management software system that is used to make sure that each jurisdiction is getting the resources that they need. A Task Force Member discussed the large mechanisms in place for recovery and assistance that help communities on a daily basis, recognizing that people need help no matter what resources come from outside of the state. Also, she discussed the need to engage the local Emergency Management Coordinator. Senator Kettering also encouraged the group to put some detailed recommendations in front of the Legislature and then take up other Task Force's long-term suggestions in the future. A Task Force member discussed how the agencies that provided training and funding are really who saved lives and assisted in recovery, and it is important not to cut the funding for exercises and planning for Iowa Homeland Security and Emergency Management and the Iowa Department of Public Health. A Task Force member discussed how the Metro Coalition, the group representing Iowa's largest ten cities, have already begun work on putting together a list of items that address immediate needs.

The Task Force discussed the importance of the individual assistance program which has \$1 million that may be able to be expanded. A member noted that when the assessment needs to

be made, there are many questions that come to the Emergency Management Agency, which does not have the capacity to handle that role, especially in wake of a disaster. The Emergency Management Agencies and Commissions are one of the first regional types of government, and they work very well. The capacity of emergency management at a local level, especially in low population areas, is a concern. McKeen noted that it is very challenging to place a price tag on planning and coordination prior to an event. A Task Force member also reported that the first level of planning takes place at the family level. The state does not provide any money through the state coffers for local emergency management. It is often challenging for local emergency managers to be charged with so many responsibilities and have little funding and authority to do it. According to state law, local emergency management is charged with coordination in an emergency. They should have the tools that they need to make those decisions, although it is also important to make sure that these emergency managers to have appropriate oversight. The group discussed the importance of having an appropriate ratio of citizens and land to emergency managers. The group discussed how many emergency managers have left the position because so many are expected to do other items in the county or serve multiple counties. From a rural county perspective, it helps that the different responders know each other, and for distance issues, many rural counties will be opposed to regionalization. Also, the state does not have extra money to assist with this effort, so it will require “borrowing” from other important funding priorities. When discussing more financial resources for the Councils of Governments, there are some new options for funding from the US Department of Commerce, but these entities have been continued to be called upon to assist in recovery. The Task Force also discussed the need for the state to develop a resource list.

Recommendations

McKeen asked the group to look at the issues and gaps, and begin to make a list of recommendations.

- Set up a state Disaster Recovery Fund to provide immediate financial resources in the form of a loan to communities to address impacts that are decided locally.
- Expand Individual Assistance Programs and provide administrative funds and resources.
- Address flooding issues on a watershed basis.
- Incorporate Smart Growth practices where applicable.
- Identify Best Practices from other states.
- Increase use of insurance as a risk management tool, and explore opportunities to use insurance for additional mitigation funding.
- Provide more flexibility to local governments and expand 28E agreements.
- Investigate ways to deliver assistance more rapidly.
- Provide expansion of state micro-enterprise support (bridge funding, grants, or loans).
- Seek state support for County Emergency Management Coordinators both in authority and funding.
- Shifting of funds and resources in state.
- Ensure that necessary data is accessible and all-inclusive to make long-term recovery decisions.
- Remove or raise the county mental health (MH/DD) expenditure cap for disaster affected areas.
- Develop comprehensive communication plan and network structure for individuals and participating agencies.
- Require all communities to institute comprehensive planning that includes disaster resiliency.
- Form a State Planning Agency to guide local planning and response and enforce local planning requirement that includes rural perspectives.
- Move funds from DNR focus to Economic Development.

- Coordinate emergency management, transportation, health, and other plans.
- 28Es: require usage, enhance regional approaches, and creative approaches for problem solving.
- Develop standard source of information structure for areas affected by disasters.
- Design Iowa-specific plans.
- Empower local elected officials to make decisions for their community.

Process for Completing 45-Day Report and Recommendations

McKeen outlined the process for the completion of the 45-day report. The report is due to the Rebuild Iowa Advisory Commission on August 18. The Task Force will be given an opportunity to review the report electronically with a 48-hour time frame for comment.

Closing Comments and Adjourn

Reasoner thanked the group for attending, loaning expertise and offering great ideas. Truax added that this is an ongoing process, and this group will be back together again in the next few months.

The meeting adjourned at 4:00.